Georgia Tech Lorraine, European Campus of the Georgia Institute of Technology

**Technology through the Ages (Technology and Society)**

**HTS 2084**

Summer 2020

Course Syllabus

**Instructor**

Dr. Timothy Stoneman

School of History and Sociology

**Time and place**

TBD

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Office 226, GTL Building

**Graduate TA** (Atlanta)

TBD

**Course Attributes**

HTS 2084 fulfills the social science and ethics requirements at Georgia Tech.

**Course Description**

Technologies have formed the basis of material culture and influenced the course of social change throughout human history. Yet the shape of technologies’ influence on society has varied significantly with time and place. The present course combines the history of technology with world history, focusing predominantly on Europe and the city of Metz. Through a wide-ranging series of historical case studies – prehistoric axes, Roman aqueducts, medieval cathedrals, French bread, fast food, and global tourism – we will see how technical practices (“engineering,” broadly defined) evolved over major eras of the past. Our case studies will show how the relationship between technology and the social order shifted over the long course of history between various types of increasingly sophisticated societies, organized around tools, crafts, machines, and industrial systems. In recounting the large-scale course of technological change, the class will prompt reflection about what it means to live in our current technological world – one in which complex and interconnected systems increasingly dominate our lives. In addition, you will personally consider the role of Georgia Tech Lorraine students as travelers/tourists in a global consumer society.

**Course Objectives**

Students will accomplish the following objectives:

* Students will describe relationships among languages, philosophies, cultures, literature, ethics, or the arts.\*
* Students will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence social behavior.\*
* Students will develop a critical perspective on changes in the relationship between technology, culture and society over major periods of human history.
* Students will integrate aspects of their living experience while in Europe with their classroom study and develop self-awareness of their identity as travel consumers.
* Students will demonstrate proficiency in the process of articulating and organizing rhetorical arguments in written, oral, visual, and nonverbal modes, using concrete support and conventional language.\*
* Students will be able to judge factual claims and theories on the basis of evidence.\*
* Students will develop effective oral and written communication skills.

(\* Language is taken directly from the General Education Mission Statement of Georgia Tech’s Core Curriculum, available on the Registrar website.)

**Grading**

Course assessment will be include the following components:

Class discussion

In-class assignments (incl. debate)

Discussions posts (Canvas)

Reading quizzes

Group essay

Test 1

Test 2

Final exam

Georgia Tech Lorraine is a serious academic program. Please let me know in advance if you cannot attend class for an official reason. Students are expected to pay attention in class and discuss readings. Please do not use electronic devices, including laptops and cell phones, without special permission.

To receive grades of excellence, students must demonstrate close understanding of course concepts and knowledge of relevant historical material covered in lectures, readings, videos, and class discussion. Final grading will be done on a letter basis and will be rounded up on the half percentage point (i.e. 89.5% = A). Final grades will not be available through Oscar until the Monday following the end of the exam period (August 5). Please do not ask to have grades changed.

Students will receive a grade for class discussion on the following scale: 95% (regular contribution) – 90% (moderate contribution) - 85% (little or no contribution). Discussion grades will be posted twice on Canvas on June 12 and July 17. Students will lead class discussion of assigned readings once (in pairs). Students will also receive a grade for in-class assignments, including a class debate(s). You must make up all missed in-class assignments or receive a grade of zero.

You will receive a grade for after-class responses completed through Discussions on Canvas. You are required to make 30 discussion posts over the semester – 15 direct posts and 15 replies to other students’ posts. Each missing post will count for 5% of your Discussions post grade. Posts must be at least one paragraph in length and written by midnight on the day of class; only one post and reply is allowed per day. Once you have met the required 30 posts, you may also earn extra points through additional posts or replies, which will count for 0.25 raw points each and will be added to the final exam grade (with a maximum of five (5) additional posts for the semester, or 1.25 total points).

Reading quizzes will cover the assigned daily reading at the start of the following class. They will include T/F questions and will be graded on the following scale (100% - (1) 90% - (2) 80% - (3) 70% - (4) 60%). Missed quizzes will not be counted in your grade and do not have to be made up. You may drop your lowest quiz grade at the end of the semester (July 24). Tests will include multiple choice, class discussion, and short essay questions. Each test will cover the preceding unit, plus relevant course concepts from the introduction; the final exam will cover the last unit plus major course concepts and a full-length, comprehensive semester essay. The course includes a full-length, take-home group essay as part of the third unit.

Tests and the final exam must be taken in their assigned slots according to the course and official exam schedules. Exceptions will only be made for emergency situations.

**Honor Policy**

Students are expected to abide by the Georgia Tech honor code. All infractions will be handled through the Office of the Dean of Students and treated with the utmost seriousness.

**Statement on Inclusion**

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports the Georgia Institute of Technology’s commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society. (Statement taken from Ivan Allen College Dean’s Office.)

**Course Materials**

There are no required textbooks. All reading material and course communication will occur through Canvas.

**Course Schedule**

Introduction: Technology & society (Unit I)

Tool-using societies (Unit II)

Prehistoric axes

Craft-based societies (Unit III)

Roman aqueducts

Gothic cathedrals

French bread & bread tasting

Industrial system-based societies (Unit IV)

Fast vs. slow food

Global tourism

The technological society (Unit V)

RING technologies